THREE MINUTE SERMONS

GEORGE H. WOODHULL

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BY

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OBEDIENCE

Three Minute Sermons

OBEDIENCE

"TO OBEY is better than sacrifice." Nothing in place of obedience is desirable. No voluntary loss, suffering, deprivation, instead of compliance with duty, is praiseworthy.

Children must obey parents because they have learned more about obedience,—have gained a partial knowledge of the laws of the world or of the ways of doing which are strong and wise and good. Whenever the father knows not what is best, he is more likely to guess aright.

The spirit of obedience is gained by subjection to unwise commands as well as to any, and obedience is first a spirit. It is not sufficient that it should be a momentary attitude of the soul, but must come to be a disposition permanently retained. We need in these days to be sure that we can do something that we are told to do; and to do it too, with spirit and precision. We need to practice marching to orders, halting to orders, fighting to orders.

Disobedience deep down in the heart is usually the reason one cannot do what is commanded.

Democratic churches and nations are supposed to

be built upon the principle, every one a ruler. When we attain to the better thought, every one obedient, we shall have not only the best *form* of government, but the best government. In addition to the grand conceptions, liberty and independence, we shall attain also to co-operation and fellowship, to righteousness and glory.

The great question always is, not, can you make your commands or your influence reach the farthest, but, *can you obey?* He would stand supreme among men who could say "I am commanded in what I do." "I obey in the exercise of power I wield." To long for positions of authority instead of real authority, to long for anything other than the authority of right and of God, is the folly of the human heart. To desire, earnestly and perseveringly—long and with prayer and sacrifice—for that ultimate authority, is sure to bring us better reward than success, and will bring us to visions of God. We are not early beyond the stage of pupils who must learn obedience. What we have not learned as children must be learned in places of authority as fathers, mothers, teachers, citizens. We are ever being turned back to the first lessons. Difficulties in commanding others teach us resignation. Hardships in life indicate that the first principle of life may be received more thoroughly.

If we, with reverence and prayer, desire to do the

will of God, and are intent upon learning what it is and upon its performance, then—though this statement is really an astounding one—*we are doing it.*

We know not whether work done with an obedient spirit is contributing to the world's progress, is being used to help God make a perfect world; or whether our service, reacting upon ourselves alone, is making us wiser, stronger, better prepared for future usefulness. However, mistaken service, to that degree to which it teaches the doer of it a lesson, is thus perfecting the world according to the plan of its Creator.

God's will is what is right. To do His will is, therefore, to do the right thing.

"God is love." What therefore love would prompt one to do is according to God's will.

God is unselfish. Therefore to live an unselfish life is to live as God would have one. The right, the loving, the unselfish, simple in some senses, can however be defined only as what God would do. These abstract conceptions for a time are able to light our feet, but followed exclusively they make onesided and unnatural characters. Men who walk strictly according to their habitual conceptions of the right, do well to consider that they do not know the right thing to do, that they need to search for more truth and melt their severity in a greater sense of God's mercy towards themselves. So, also, those

who have grown, in conduct and life, loving and unselfish may discover that they conceive of love only as affection, or sentiment, or kindness, of unselfishness as giving up to others, as though love might not show itself in firmness or anger, as though there were no unselfishness in receiving.

However rash the assertion may be, its seeming rashness may the more strongly indicate the confidence we should have in God's guidance. The prayerful and consecrated and disciplined soul will find that what he persistently and intelligently wants to do, it is God's will that he should do.

When life on earth is over, we may see that our first lesson was also our last. Our best ways will have been pursued beyond our thoughts or expectations or desires, ways which may only be defined as those of faith and dependence,—of blind obedience.

CONSECRATION

"LO, WE have left all and followed thee."

There is a difference between one who will not confess Christ because ashamed of Christ, and one who will not confess, because ashamed of himself. Our Lord never excluded from the company of His followers those who were diffident, self-distrustful, morbid, hypersensitive, confused in thought.

What is the needle's eye? that which is hard for men, but regarding which it is written "with God all things are possible." What is the strait gate? the narrow way, the hard saying, who can hear it? . . . We need to keep our eyes on the gate posts of the strait-gate in the words "leave all and follow me."

The "witness of the Spirit" is not the needle's eye. It is not promised that a certain experience, like Paul's, like Finney's, like some other Christian's at the altar kneeling is possible for everyone, at a certain time. God knows best when to give us the fruits of the spirit and certainly they are in store for us all. "Patience worketh experience."

To put the acceptance of any doctrine as essential to salvation, is to deny that there is only one essential, and that the attitude of the soul described in the

text. To be concerned over points of theology, as though they were essential to conversion, is really to doubt God and so one may never get any answer to his questions. God is not slow to teach those who are in spirit disciples. We are not cut off from great and sure progress when we ask questions with a view to better service, better worship, larger growth, more sincere loyalty to God.

To be with faith and self-abandonment ready to receive the truth when it is presented, and ready to obey it and defend it among men, may be, when understood, a part of the original compact made by every disciple with the Great Teacher. "To leave all" rightly and fully comprehended, means to be sincere, to give up prejudices if they are found false, to be ready to receive the truth.

To be concerned over forms of worship and the administration of ordinances, as though they were the first condition of eternal life, is to act as Paul's converts did when they went back, as he said, to the "beggarly elements." That seems to have meant to raise the question how to start in the way of life; in such a way as to show lack of faith, in such a way as to tend to undo the work already done, or to turn out of the way in which progress had been made, to try to start over again in some impossible way. Going back to the beggarly elements shows one hasn't left all. It is a weakening in the vow. Going on

strongly in the life of sons, waiting patiently for God, refusing to doubt God, shall one grow rich and strong, shall one learn to ask questions, not in doubt of God, but of the stronger faith in Him. If one purpose that God's will should be done, and that he shall reign in his own heart and life,—then God will there reign; and as a willing subject he shall learn the truth. Providence teaches the lessons the disciples learned; and no man is so ignorant that day by day he may not learn the ways of life, the truths about God which make for reverence and righteousness.

The Chrsistian can more completely leave all. Can renew his vow of consecration. Can comprehend more fully all that is implied. It should come to be not alone an intention, a promise, but an achievement fully wrought out. At length it must become a kind of Christian self abandonment in thought, in affections, in art, in life. It is to be so self-abandoned as wisely and skillfully to leave the evil and the earthly for the right and the spiritual, to be ready to respond to conscience's call to duty at any cost; to be open to higher visions and hopeful in God's discipline, conscious of Divine acceptance, thankful for blessings which one cannot yet appreciate; these, as experiences grow rich, come to be understood as part of the significance of "leaving all and following Him."

FIRST AND chiefly, to leave all is a spiritual act. In the midst of pressing duties, personal cares, one can conceive what it means. One can shake himself loose from all and ask what is duty? What is best and noblest to do and be, and what he should do at all hazards? A man must not drift, nor be borne away from duty, even by the pressure of mighty floods of influence. The soul should assert its lordship completely over the body and over the world.

At times one should put aside the cares of the world that there may be quiet, and this should be done by effort. The key should be turned to the place of business, however hard it is to do so, and the thoughts should be locked outside, that one may hear the voice of God clearer, and think more carefully what is meant.

To perseveringly consider all that it means to leave all, is the duty of each disciple. We can ask God what he would have us do with riches. Is it unjustly asserted by Christian teachers of the age that the wealth of Christians is not properly applied? Would God use money differently from what Christian people do for perfecting the world?

Would it be more noble and Godlike to spend more for highly mental and spiritual uses? Do we give enough of our time to others? Do we judge our employees with sufficient sympathy and patience? at the same time do we deal with them with sufficient firmness? Do we restrain our pity when it would move us to interfere with God's discipline of a soul? What does leaving all mean with reference to the profession one should be in? or business? or occupation? studies one should take up? influence exert? place of residence choose? plan of procedure immediately undertake? prayers begin to offer? To ask such questions devoutly will bring light and progress.

For one thing, to leave all means service of God *gladly* rendered. It means desire that the right may reign in us and in everyone, and it means effort to establish it. As we live in this spirit, enthusiasm for service in the Church must increase. This spirit of enthusiasm will prevail upon the world without. The Christian teaches falsely when he sighs over his service and gives the impression that one grows poor and weak through giving and sacificing. The church only sends out the message of truth—that is what is according to fact—which shows that those are full who gladly and wisely give up and serve. All strength of men has come in the way that seemed to be the giving up of all.

It is safe to leave all. We are not wrong in feeling the importance of our life interests, but we are wrong in failing to trust the Great Heart of the Universe.

God presses men and women hard sometimes, in sickness or peculiar trial, to make them believe in Him. He wills that we become more consistent. We say we will leave all and follow Him. God in Providence determines that what we have said shall be done. In the midst of life we find God marching upon us—through sickness, through burdens overwhelming, through problems unsolvable. Let us be glad we have taken the vow we have. Let us hope that God will train us to do it to the uttermost. We sometimes say in moments of self-sufficiency and of doubt, "Life is hard," "life is strange." But at length God falters not at his child's sigh, or misunderstanding, or doleful thought. He has confessed a good confession and God will carry him along on resistless influences into the full glory of its inner meaning.

We cannot fully leave all unless God makes us do it. We cannot perhaps, if worn and sorely tried, ever *feel* free from such trials as one could desire to. We can only leave all according to our understanding of duty and our strength to do it; but that is quite sufficient now.

We cannot judge others, whether or not they have

left all. Christ was not unwilling that His disciples should realize that they had not really given up all. It is enough to give up so far as we can. The heart may cling to much and it is impossible that unnatural fears should be at once quieted. A vow taken with the fullest sense of one's weakness may be best of all. "I promise to *try* asking God's help, to leave all and follow Him." The vow of the Christian will be no weaker if taken with consciousness of inability and dependence upon God. To try with God's help is enough, and leads the surest way to ultimate triumph,—to those things possible with God.

"Whosoever hath left all shall receive a hundred fold now in this world, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers and children, and lands," —the best words of this present world; "and in the world to come, eternal life."

PERSEVERANCE

"WHEN THEY were come down from the mountain."

The question of greatest moment for one is not whether he can sometimes get upon the mountain tops of experience or not; but, can he go with Christ into the valleys beneath? Can we discover that what is good to think about is equally good to do?

That is not a light which will not shine in the dark. The soul that is illuminated in the especial revival season may be lighted from without, not from within. The special season in church is the time of transfiguration for you, but do you prove to have any of that glory within when it does not shine round about? Are you true in duty, faithful in hardship, steadfast in danger?

Men sometimes say "I am sorry my soul was filled with hope formerly; because the hope was destined to perish and make my burden harder to bear." Now what does this mean, but that what was seen upon the mountain top was false, and delusive, therefore I wish I had not been exalted? What is seen in the light is true, what is seen in the darkness is false. What is seen in discouragement is false. If one ever

spends an hour of noble vision and great resolves, of deep longings and prayers, then should he value that experience, and remember it, and believe in it, even if it contradict all other experiences of all the other hours of his life.

Christ teaches that God may be in a life down cast and wretched. "My clothes are poor, therefore I am of no consequence." How absurd that one in whom God dwells should so speak! "My home is illy furnished therefore of course the Divine One dwells not with me." "My reputation is nothing, therefore of course God and the angels have little pleasure in my life."

Gideon's army gains the victory rather than the multitudes who join it after they hear the first cries of victory. Those who are faithful through the year in prayer and service are the ones God honors as the means through whom the world is redeemed and perfected. Not the prayers of revival season are so effective as of the few at mid-summer or mid-winter prayer meeting.

A degree of faithfulness is likely to accumulate some wealth, sure to accumulate character and power in service. One of the greatest gains one may make is a habit of faithfulness. The saddest loss is of one who has no longer a hope of becoming faithful.

Life in all relations demands faithfulness and

when we say this we mean God everywhere is commanding us to be Christlike.

In Revelation Christ is called "The Faithful." What a word is it for us to be called!

. . . .

From behind the veils God does something every moment in the clouds, in the fields, in the stars, in the waters. Looking back through the history of man we observe God has been ever working. If the earth's movements thus reveal to us the Divine Worker, there is a new interest and importance given to common materials and little matters. Fidelity will hold its way through the commonplace as it learns to perceive it glorious.

How can we serve God in world-making, world-redeeming, unless we day by day give reverent attention to Him, in creation, in providence, in redemption?

Also, the good servant must proceed from contemplation to experimental service in small ways. Some day we shall be called to rule over ten cities, now we must prepare for it by ruling in some small circle of affairs.

If one has ever courage to do his best he may now and then throw out into the world a good deed. A deed good through and through, in motive and in aim, in suitableness and in timeliness, may be limited in what it accomplishes by what others do, but

is itself a seed of Heaven. As the world is made of grains of sand—so though we cannot make a good world or a Heaven, we may make such a good deed as with others will make Heaven, or a good world. While we labor to understand the vastness of Heaven, let us make a little deed like it, speak a little word like it, work after the model.

Look wide in thought, but command all upon one point in work. Our work must have relation to the whole, must be like what all should be, but may also in itself be complete. There are little circles as well as great circles, little worlds as well as great worlds. In some architecture, the parts are like the whole; there are small arches as well as great arches.

The nice work done in hidden places is for God to see. The perfect care in smallest things shows genuineness. Interest in the least things shows one in love with his work.

FELLOWSHIP

"WE HAVE fellowship one with another." Christian fellowship is the vital power of the kingdom of God. Christ regenerates men, but He said "I give unto you the keys of the kingdom of Heaven." He sends us out from His family, and every sister he commands to go and become a sister to the lost, and by the power of sisterliness (not descending into the family of Satan) bring up the lost to be sharers of the inheritance of the children of God. Brothers thus are to extend brotherliness. Even as our Lord invited himself to the home of the outcast Zaccheus. This is overcoming evil with good, is implicit faith, self abandoned faith. Thus shall one entrusting his soul to God be kept, be made a power unto the salvation of the world.

. . . .

"Go and do thou likewise."
"This do, and thou shalt live."

The command at the end of the parable of the Good Samaritan and the promise at its beginning indicate that the way to eternal life is in the exercise of Christian fellowship. This is not salvation by "morality" or by "works." For Christ, not

found by journeying any whither,—is there—in the practice of brotherliness.

. . . .

In this day men are laboring to supply our tables on the distant islands of the sea, in every land however distant. They clothe us, and supply our furnishings. The labor of our hands in like manner is for the brother that is near and the brother that is far. The joy that touches the heart in labor is none other than the manifestation of Him who is the Life of the World. In labor, he who saves men from sin is sanctifying the souls of men. Here He should be declared to men. Here confessed by them.

. . . .

"Am I my brother's keeper?"
"As I have loved you."

The virtues of thrift and enterprise by which men become rich and successful are virtues of the Kingdom of Heaven, but not the chief virtues. These imply considerable knowledge of the laws of God, much self denial and self control, and are a proof either of personal faith or of an inheritance of the virtues of faith through a Christian ancestry. On the other hand, humility, self-sacrifice, self-forgetfulness, childlikeness, love, faith, may be in the characters of men and yet they be failures in this world's battles. Those therefore who have done most to

build up this world in character may be found among the poor and thriftless. Some men have inherited vital power to cope with the forces of nature and of society. Such have neighbors who, because of inherited weaknesses, are entitled to their help and should be assisted by their wisdom, enthusiasm, rebuke, forbearance, kindliness.

. . . .

"Bear ye one another's burdens."

We are not yet our brother's keeper in the sense we are to become such. The great attainment of the world thus far under the influence of Providence and Grace is liberty. The bells of the world have thus far rang out this message. The victories of American arms, of Great Britain's, and of those of all civilized nations have been for the glorious extension of liberty to many peoples. Political reforms have long related to the working out of human freedom.

Liberty is largely a negative word. It means that men should be let alone by their fellow men as much as possible, that they should not be hindered in the exercise of their powers, or in the attainment of their enjoyments. It includes what is enjoined in the ten commandments, the "Thou shalt nots."

The new commandment of the New Testament, "As I have loved you" is the measure of "burden

bearing" for a brother in the Kingdom of Heaven. The cross of Christ is our ideal of self-denial for others. No man yet approaches it. This law of the Kingdom is not yet obeyed in the world. It is as the Heavens above the earth. Such is our Lord's thought and spirit above ours. We look to him for our hope and for the hope of the world. We must follow after. Our hearts are not yet large enough and cannot be; our prayers are not sufficient in faith and cannot be. Indeed the new command cannot be fulfilled by word and deed, but by growth into Christlikeness. It is for us only through heartiest worship and sincerest following of Him. The future paths of progress lead not to the working out of liberty, but of brotherhood.

GOD

"GOD IS love."

The Apostle John does not leave room for anything not love in God. He is light. He is love. These words the evangelist uses one for the other. In Him there is no darkness at all, and whosoever loveth is born of God. Conversely, whosoever hateth, is not yet all changed into the likeness of God. God is righteous, He is just, He commandeth. But His righteous commands are also loving. His justice is loving. If He is wrathful, His is a loving wrath. If He is a consuming fire, He consumes evil and him who doeth evil. He consumes sin, and death and destruction, and him who sins and kills and destroys. Such ought to be condemned. Such love itself abhors and condemns.

The message which has greatest power, most quiet, irresistible, abiding power upon character is, God loves you. The message, however expressed, in word or suggestion, brings comfort to the afflicted and strength to the weak. Those who are most courtly in manner are those who have observed the tokens of God's grace towards themselves most faithfully. Those whose words are the cheeriest are the ones who have gained confidence towards God.

Those who can arise out of their past sins, their present weaknesses are the ones who have taught themselves well the truth of God's love. Those who can run upon a host of evil and endure suffering without self-pity are those who have supported themselves by this truth. The one who can endure a hard life, with little honor, and not much comfort, is the one who has found the true support of life.

Now that the Bible and the cross of Christ and the church of the ages have declared to the world God's love, we have need to look for the message of God's love in the flowers, the songs of birds, the grass, the trees, the hills and rivers, the ocean and the sky. The sunset and the stars all may teach us this truth. This is that of which "day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge." We have most need to train our ears to hear this message on every hand. We have most need to pray "teach me better and better to perceive what the stars say of Thee, what the moon and the sun have to say." We need to find this message written even on angry cloud and uttered in threatening tempest of wind or wave. The wind of the prairie or of the ocean may lose its power to annoy or terrify when we can find in its music "God loves you." "God loves you."

WE HAVE a sense of Divine love, of truth, of right. We see human life, physical movement. The sense of these is the sight of God. These are the "light" by which God reveals Himself to us. Looking back and forth through the history of man, we find it certain that man knows God. It is more difficult for him to know *that* he knows Him, and to know just how he knows Him; and yet this knowledge comes not alone through trances and unnatural visions. The time must be approaching in which the world shall be conscious that it has a spiritual vision of God as clearly as prophets and apostles had. Nature is seen to reveal a Divine mind. Visible things are themselves beams of light revealing the source of all Being and Power.

"High above the limits of my seeing,
And folded far within the inmost heart,
And deep below the deeps of conscious being,
Thy splendor shineth; there, O God! Thou art."

The savage who saw God in the glow worm, heard Him in the thunder, reverenced Him in sun or northern light, perhaps felt more certain of Him

than we, who have learned to see Him in all these and in everything. Yet we have ground to be more sure of our knowledge than was he.

To look at the dim light is pleasant, to behold the sun is painful. To reflect in devotion upon what God promises, gives, would have us do, may be pleasant; to contemplate God Himself is hard. Yet may such contemplation purify the soul.

Our visions of God, like the revolving light at sea, are sufficient during the storm.

The sun sends forth such floods of light that it may be questioned if we can see the sun itself. So God gives so bountifully, truth, righteousness, goodness, food for the body, beauty for the eye, care over the least creature, that the soul can only know God as the hidden source of all. Yet, as the Prophet of Revelation saw the Lord as the source of His works and of His ineffable glory, so may we assert that He is seen or known today.

THE BIBLE

LUKE, an early follower of Jesus wrote two books about Him, the third and fifth of the New Testament. One of these describes about thirty years of Christ's life while in the flesh, the other describes the continuance of His ministry after He had disappeared in the cloud and was invisibly present with His disciples. Each relates a similar story of good deeds, of suffering in service, of faithful loyalty to God, of conversions, of the deliverance of gospel messages. In other words, we may say Luke and Acts describe the first sixty years of Christianity. The whole history of the church has been like its beginnings. "The sick are healed, the poor have the gospel" wherever the light of Christian civilization has gone, and no message to the doubting would be so forcible as a faithful account of all the praying, singing, suffering service which has elevated the world in civilization and in Christian character since the life of Jesus. We have need of a Book of Acts covering 1900 years, and describing such things as have been done after the example of Him who went about Galilee.

Outlines of the gospel of Luke and of Acts have been made out differently. The books are incom-

parable and may fall into analysis of different kinds. Luke is the proclamation of good tidings sung by angels, and by men, made known by John the Baptist, Jesus and the disciples, by proclamations, teachings and deeds. These good tidings are the announcement of the coming of a person to earth, and are His teachings, promises; the influences of His life. They introduce—nay, indeed become—a life and a society. The character, teachings, assurance, Spirit, —in a word the life of Jesus—imparted to His disciples, becomes a new life and a new society in the world. The spread of this life from one to a few, from the few to the many, aiming to possess all and to encompass the world, is the story of Luke and Acts. In place of a logical plan of these books, a surface study of texts and words will be suggested as leading to better results in the end.

The new life is described as a light shining out into the world. Using this figure the elements or colors of this light may be traced through the books and thence through the history of Christianity to this day. For example, the prayerfulness of Jesus is one element of the new life, a new kind of praying which was to make itself known as a blessing and power throughout the world. One can find light-touched passages here and there in the language of Luke and Acts where the idea of prayer comes to the surface to disappear again. A hurried study of Luke brings

out twelve references of clauses, texts, or longer passages scattered through the book and Acts presents a somewhat larger number.

So the idea of joy touches the narrative about the same number of times. We find songs of joy, exhortations to be of good cheer, promises of great joy and descriptions of exceeding gladness. It is asked in modern times what is Christianity, and it is supposed sometimes that it is a system of theology, or an order of priesthood. Especially is that organized and professed Christianity which is called the church, sometimes regarded as vestments, ordinances, priestly systems, orders of government, statements of doctrine. In Luke and Acts we find Christianity, and it is precisely what organized Christianity in the church, should diligently seek to be. It is the prayer of "faith"—to the "Father"; it is joy in a new life, from a promise, in a hope.

A third element of this new life may be set down as deeds of kindness and mercy. It is more difficult to trace the references for this as so much of the narrative is filled with the accounts of healings, of the giving forth of forgiveness, teaching, comfort, and of fellowship to those socially ostracised. In the beginning of His preaching He declares it His mission to give good tidings, deliverance, sight, liberty. At length all His life comes to appear as a kind and merciful giving of Himself even until the final lay-

ing down of all for the remission of the sins of the world. From one aspect Christ's life was a giving of Himself, from another it was prayerful, from another it was joyful. One becomes convinced that the occasions of prayer and joy and of blessing others are manifestations of the abiding spirit of His life. The book of Acts presents the disciples left upon the earth looking for the inspiration of the invisible Lord now ascended into the cloud, as continuing in the generosity of their Lord. After the first sermon on the day of Pentecost, there was a revival of philanthropy which continued; the disciples selling their possessions and giving to each "according as any man had need." The disposition to give the gospel to all people becomes more and more a ruling passion, most strikingly exhibited in Paul.

A fourth element is suffering in service. Born in a manger, struggling in temptation in the wilderness, violently rejected, harshly accused (as of speaking blasphemy), met by cavil and finally by rage and plots against His life, mocked, beaten, insulted, tortured to death Jesus teaches His disciples to leave all, and endure stripes, imprisonment, martyr-deaths, ship-wrecks, stoning, hunger, evil report. Sacrifice is perhaps the chief feature of Christianity and again here it becomes evident that the manifest instances of sacrifice are really manifestations of the nature of the life here given to the world. The dis-

ciples and Jesus were always sacrificial. At root the same acts which were sacrificial were also joyful; prayerful as well as generous. They were as ready to endure hardness when none was required as at other times, and when they met their severest trials their joy became the greatest.

A fifth element to be traced in the books is fellowship. He drew to Himself a band of followers. He taught them mutual helpfulness. He accepted invitations many times to the houses of the high and low. He reinforced the message of His contemporary, John the Baptist. He taught His disciples to cooperate in work, and organized a larger company of seventy followers also to such cooperation. His teachings inculcated the principle that all believers were as one family. In Acts the disciples are spoken of as "abiding in an upper chamber," they are spoken of as brethren, they have all things common, they cooperate in service and suffering, participate in prayer and joy. The words "brethren," "company," "together" are much used. Churches are organized. As before, it may be shown that this also is the spirit of the new life. Every Christian heart is abidingly social, in prayer, joy, generosity and sacrifice remembering the brethren. No Christian can live to himself.

A sixth element of Christianity is conversion. It was perhaps symbolized in Jesus' own life in His

visit to the Temple at the age of twelve, and His subsequent growth, in His baptism and struggle in the wilderness; but it was especially what He sought to accomplish in His disciples and all He met. Moreover it was all the change that His words and example wrought in the lives of His followers from the first vow of theirs to leave all and follow until they stand forth transformed from weakness into strength. This change appears as prayerfulness of those who knew the Father, of a new joy, of a new generosity, a new self-sacrifice, a new fellowship. The few believed through Jesus' preaching, thousands through that of Peter and thousands upon thousands through that of Paul.

The seventh element is preaching. The Gospel of Luke is clearly filled with the preaching of Jesus, and Acts contains many sermons of Peter, Stephen, and Paul. This also is a permanent element of Christian disposition. Always the desire to tell of the new life is an abiding spirit of the disciple. The new prayerfulness in which the Father is known, the new joy, the new generosity, sacrifice, fellowship, and all the change wrought will ever be communicated to others.

The eighth element is a special sense of the Divine presence and influence. The Divine presence and influence seem to grow more and more manifest throughout Jesus' life, and even more manifest as His

Spirit after the ascension abiding with His disciples.

It may be felt that there are other elements in New Testament and apostolic life which deserve mention and perhaps that the foregoing analysis should be differently made; but none will deny that this we have been describing is indeed the life which the gospel proclaimed and the apostles received and spread abroad. Here are no vestments, here is no order of priesthood, no system of doctrine or of government. Moreover there is no doubt this life has ever been in the church. She has in every age been prayerful. She has ever been loud and glad in praise. Her philanthropy has never ceased, her martyr spirit never been quenched, her fellowship has never weakened, conversion has ever been the greatest fact in connection with her influence, preaching has ever been an element of her power, and the Holy Spirit has ever been recognized. Though vestments, priestly orders and doctrines have been more or less prominent, whether wisely or unwisely this may have been, these have not been her life but her outward form. It is this New Testament and apostolic life on the other hand, which will never grow old.

JONAH

THE BOOK of Jonah brings before us the weakness of Old Testament religion. Old Testament prophets and saints believed in obedience. It was their pride that they obeyed God. But they hated the Gentile nations many of which were at war with Israel and were destined to eventually destroy her. The spirit of God's people was thus not that of the New Testament or that which Christ enjoined. God would that all peoples should know the truth and walk therein. Israel was entrusted with the oracles of God that she might be a light to the Gentiles. This unwillingness of Israel to proclaim the truth to other nations was disobedience. Let Israel not think obedience simply meant to keep the ten commandments. Her prophets must proclaim the truth given them to Ninevah. Their unwillingness to do this was direct disobedience. So for church members today not to proclaim the truth to outcasts and to irreligious neighbors is direct disobedience; for the church not to send the word to neglected regions and to heathen peoples is disobedience as really as to break the ten commandments.

The only message the prophet was capable of car-

rying to Ninevah was one of threatening. This message, however, it was his duty to take, and it was one God could use. God however meant it as a warning, Jonah as vengeance. Though God could use the prophet who spoke the word that he ought to speak even though his heart was not yet perfect; it is evident that God would have his servant become not only obedient in act but in heart also. Jonah is therefore gently shown that he should desire what God desires, be as merciful toward wicked Ninevah as God Himself was.

This is the very climax of Old Testament teaching, a teaching which Paul found Christian Israel unready to receive. And to this day the exclusiveness of Israel and Israel's prophet reappears in every church which fails not only to preach the gospel of life in Christ to the world about; but still more to be heart full of prayer and of hope for the world without. Not to preach the gospel is disobedience. Not to have a spirit conformable to Christ's spirit towards the world is also disobedience.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN AND REVELATION

THESE TWO books are often thought of together and have been supposed to be from the same author.

If God is love, someone has asked, and if He would that all men should be saved, why are not all men saved? In the gospel of John we see the forgiveness of a loving God, as it is expressed in word and manifested in the life of Jesus, carried to the world and we study its effect upon the world. The book is a study. What will man do with God's forgiveness, love, fellowship? The answer appears in every chapter of the book. It is a marvelous answer. Some believe and some doubt! The few believe and follow, the multitude reject and take counsel to put Him to death. The conflict between Divine love and Divine truth and Man's unbelief and rebellion are the subject of every page of the book. Though man appears mainly unbelieving and hostile this is not the chief point of emphasis; but rather God's sacrificial contest for man to overcome his folly and ignorance and sin.

The book of Revelation presents the Lord in His present glorious reign over human affairs. The book itself is the unveiler of Christ. The coming spoken

of is through the words of the sacred writer. In the book the cloud into which he withdrew is parted to reveal to the comprehension of mankind His present existence, and His present relation to those in Heaven and on Earth. He sits there in glory, and is worshipped and obeyed by those above and those beneath. He moves the pages of the book of life, pours out judgment upon evil, brings salvation, reigns for ever and ever. Through Him the earth is changed, the faithful are purified and delivered and made victorious. Nations bring their glory to his realm.

The book of Revelation is a word painting of the history of the world. The Divine purpose of war and pestilence, of suffering and disease; the future breaking away of all clouds of persecution, of oppression; the reward of faithfulness; the power of the incense of prayer, the certainty of the coming glory over all earth clouds; the certainty of the advent of peace, the perfection and righteousness which must be the end for which all things exist; the future of all people, of all individuals is here presented. A message from Jesus Christ to men through John. Every evil and oppression shall come to naught, all gloom and weeping pass away. The relation of Jesus Christ to all things shall at length be recognized by all as it was by John. It shall become manifest and confessed that the kingdoms of this

world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ and He shall reign forever and ever.

It would seem that the mind of the writer of Revelation confused his word painting with the history of the world. He forgets his own words and is absorbed in his vision.

THE CHURCH

THOUGHTS that are God's enter your mind because you were taught them in the church. Joy springs up in your heart. Consolation comes in trouble. Fortitude in trial. Sinful courses are shunned. Why? Because of truth recalled, once learned at church, spiritual attitudes received from church or church life.

It is easy to be ungrateful for the highest blessings. They come in disguise. We may not be grateful that the church lays fearlessly upon the consciences of men the right. We may not be aware of her influence upon the community towards decency, self-respect, uprightness; her atmosphere pervading everywhere. We may easily under value the importance of Christian fellowship for ourselves.

A greater fellowship will spring up in the church when there is a more earnest service. Let us give to the church more of our toil. Let us remind ourselves that she stands for SERVICE such as we are only beginning to dream of. Not needless toil and pain such as the saints of old often rendered to prove their love as they climbed a mountain in the frost on bared knees, but wisely directed, God-impelled and guided work for the upbuilding of the kingdom

of Heaven on earth. How shall we do it? What shall we do? God who has sent this command to us in messages from countless pulpits and is giving us ears to hear it as never before since the apostolic days, will give us power to do it, and wisdom to perform it well.

The church's work is all that the Lord wanted to accomplish while on earth,—all that He wants to accomplish now. The gracious invitation must be proclaimed. We must summon the strength to utter the glad message where we may not seem to have strength to proclaim it, save as God will give it to us. We must look up, wherever man looks down. We must hold on to truth and hope, and be messengers of these wherever men are found. We must give ourselves as a gospel light—our word, act, journey, plan, forbearance. The church wants the peculiar tone of yourself in the message she is sending out. It is the manifoldness that is needed; all the members different from each other and yet all engaged in a perpetual prayer service or testimony meeting, all forever supporting each other, together engaged in one work.

God has chosen to use an imperfect church to accomplish the salvation of the world. Such a church he has used for nineteen hundred years. Those who are being redeemed—not yet fully redeemed—may be used. He commands the one who has only heard

the call, to call others. As He lifts us from darkness, He commands us to hold on to others. One whose weaknesses are plain, not only to God, but to his fellow men, may dare to reach out his hand to lost men, not because of what he is, but because of Him whom he trusts, and because of what he knows he is becoming. Indeed the church has too much lost its power by listening to the world's criticisms. She is already, in a sense, too good. She has feared to receive the people who are evil and ignorant, and are so from inheritance, and surroundings; and opens her doors to the people who have inherited the virtues of civilization. Mr. Bryce in his American Commonwealth says the churches are filled with the better class of people. This is not because the worst classes of people are not as desirous of being better, not as ready to trust in Christ for growth in character, but because the membership do not cut across the criticism of the world with utter abandonment to the Master's guidance. The condition of membership is not the possession of virtue, but the pursuit of it. Church members should be, not those who profess to be good, but who desire to be better through Christ.

Children are at present excluded from the church for somewhat the same sort of reason. They are not invited in, because they do not understand the doctrines. They would come if cordially invited, in

larger numbers than older people. If parents and Sunday School teachers in the church would explain that Christ helped all who trusted in Him, to become good, that they were invited to the privileges of the church that they might have the help of all fellow Christians so that they might understand Christ and obey Him, they would come, and come with more sincere purpose than older Christians come with. The right spirit and conduct in the church would at once make possible the reception of, we may suppose, many thousands if not millions of children to protestant communion in the United States.

That children in the church, as well as older people of little religious training, may bring that great glory to a church which ought chiefly to be desired for her, namely *growth* in virtuous character: the watch-care in the church should become very efficient. A watch-care brotherly, frank, self-abandoned in faith, for the good of the disciplined and not primarily for the purification of the church, only for the purification of the church through a purification of members, not necessarily gentle or pleasant, not necessarily severe or disagreeable, but with utter devotion to the good of the soul for whom it is exerted; this is the great need of the church. In order that this watch-care may be what it should, Christian fellowship must not be under subjection to per-

sonal likes and dislikes. People's fancies must not rule the church. Must not even control in the choice of officers or dismission of them.

The expectation of finding the church Godlike in perfection must be given up. To find that the church and the Bible are designed only to point the way to God is the climax of protestantism. The minister and the members who point aright, who give the true message, who make known the will and suggest the presence of God, best fulfill their functions. No book or church contains Him. For this very cause it is well (and not ill) that unreasoning devotion turns to the crucifix; that formulas of prayer are repeated; that Christian worship most nearly approaches idolatry in reverence for the cross. It is well that our weakness and sin we should thus be freed from; our peace thus receive, our one-ness with God and man thus perceive.

PATRIOTISM

PATRIOTISM

THE religion of the Old Testament was a patriotic religion. We are again in America learning to mingle love of God and love of country. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." These words put into an American's lips might be made to read as follows: "If I forgot thee, oh native land, let my right hand become helpless. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not my country above my chief joy."

The evils in our country cannot be entirely removed by any law or system of reforms. The motive of each soul is not yet perfect, therefore the result of all our lives cannot be perfect. Not every act in production and distribution is for country and God, therefore we may not expect a just distribution and a wise production to be the result of all our deeds. The whole, large, round life is the sum of the little worlds which each community, each family, each individual is. Nothing but such a spirit as Christ showed forth in His life and death can remove the evils out of our land.

Fruits are raised of various kinds in Florida, New Mexico and California, in Kansas and Missouri, of various kinds in every state. It is to be reasonably assumed that God would wish to see a basket of many fruits every day, in every household of the country. As a God of love He has made provisions for this. Man's problem then is to so cultivate and to so distribute, to so labor, to so plan, to so give, to so receive, that God's will in this shall be perfectly done. Perfect beneficence and perfect justice towards every creature, respecting every least thing absorbs the interest and may tax the power of God. Towards it, therefore, He summons into service His angels and His children here below.

How can one love his neighbor as himself in every act? It is more than many can do to support themselves without taking responsibility for one hundred millions!

Christianity always is more than anyone can do, always is faith, and a patriotic life must be one that remembers country in the hour of prayer and devotion. Perhaps a life spent as patriotically as the soldier's in battle, will not fare worse than most do spent otherwise, and will find far more tolerable conditions than was found by Him who bade us *follow* Him.

It would be a good resolve for everyone to make, to live for country as truly and as heroically as those

who have been to battle for her. He who has the soldier's spirit will discover something which represents his life which he can lay upon the altar. He who risks his good name for his country, or for the King of his country, risks what is a part of his life. He who wisely puts in jeopardy his friendships, his living, his position, risks his life. He who enters his studies and devotions with a purpose to find out how he may live for his country, will find some way to make his life count as much as any soldier's.

Are there not multitudes already who live every day as patriotically as the soldier does? One man in the West made, out of the waste prairie, three farms on which are beautiful homes, flowers, shade trees, orchards, fences, barns, outbuildings. He will die a poor man. Has he served his country less heroically than those who faced bullets and are receiving pensions? Ministers, doctors, teachers, inventors are often as patriotic as soldiers. Someone has said that troops who go behind the cannon to win victories deserve no more appreciation than the men who invented those cannons. The struggle days and nights in thought, the anguish for weeks in persuading the world to accept one's ideas is not easier than an exposure of life and limb to injury. Still the nation has no more—nor so much need of cannon, as of toys and games for recreation, as of utensils and machines for convenience and use.

Those who have given the world these may have endured more trial of body and mind than American soldiers have; and have certainly not received either remuneration or appreciation to a like degree.

We need to keep before ourselves the heroism needed and the heroism already being exercised to make a nation. It takes not less to make the life of a people righteous and beautiful, than to defend liberties, to create constitutions, to explore frontiers and subdue deserts. We need as much sacrifice to make houses artistic, furnishings beautiful, minds cultured, as to rear great ware houses and business offices. We need sacrifice to make our national life abound with literary men and artists; with men of true refinement and great ideas.

Rich men's children may not be delivered from enfeebling influences until it becomes clear in our national life that when one is no longer driven to work to supply bodily wants, there is other work as important for him to do for the country to which he belongs. Literature may not flourish unless rich men again feel it their duty to become patrons of literature. The men who need the leisure to write great poems, or bring great messages to their fellow men are certainly bowing under the burdens of labor in great numbers. It is the wealthy man's privilege to search them out, help them with education and with books, and surround them with the refinements

and resources which will make possible for them the higher life. In an ideal nation everyone will be rich. The chief reason why property must remain in a country is that its people have not yet set their affections on things above. We, as a nation, need to stir ourselves up to two or three old ideals. We need to keep alive the Hebrew thought of a theocracy, an ideal which the Pilgrim Fathers brought to New England. Great Britain is ruled by Parliament. What body or seat of authority holds sway in America? English writers say Parliament is in theory omnipotent in the nation and its dependencies. But our fore fathers so balanced power against power, House of Representatives against Senate, Senate against President, Judges against Legislators, that it has been said only the people are the rulers. We are a democracy indeed. But the people find their wills so blocked by the political bosses and by professional politicians, so handicapped by misrepresentation of facts in the papers, and by their own short memories, that it is plain that the ultimate control is only in the hands of the Unseen. The just and good intention of every citizen, the secret love of country and obedience to God's will are in the last resort the safeguards. We are safe because Jehovah rules over the hearts and consciences of the people.

He inspires them to patriotism in all walks of

life. He has surrounded each citizen with an atmosphere called Public Opinion which restrains him from evil, and fills the heart of each with longing to do some heroic deed. A small fire in a village, of a barn, discovered a dozen heroes among the neighbors who fought the flames. Our seat of authority is lodged in no place in particular, that we may look devoutly to God as our King.

Prejudices against England have of late been largely dispelled, prejudices which had lived for over a hundred years. Though we ought to have a friendly spirit towards the people of our own language and blood, we should, at the same time, maintain a critical attitude towards them. We came forth from them not only to be politically another nation, but to be separate also in character. England's spirit is imperial and military. She has fallen heir to the spirit of Napoleon, is filled with the ancient love of conquest and a desire for the primacy over other peoples. She professes and professes genuinely to desire to do good by her supremacy; but such is ever the claim of despots. We have cultivated a spirit of peace. We have often endured evil in order to avoid war. We have suffered the imputation of cowardice many a time by our patience. Our mission is to teach the world peace. It is not our mission to use force even to accomplish good. He that takes the sword shall perish by the sword.

Such a spirit of conquest as England has is destructive to the nation which suffers itself to be swept away by it. The highest good can only be carried to the world by those who eschew the use of force. A bloody kingdom will be shut out of the highest service of the world. The same sacrifice of life and money is used in war can always accomplish more if used to carry ideas and institutions.

The greatest internal need in this country is for local newspapers of a broad, patriotic and truthful spirit. The citizen is helped by the great periodicals to obtain an approximately just view of national issues and men, there is no way for him to get a just view of state, county and city affairs. The greatest responsibilities of a citizen are those close at hand. The citizen's part in these is greater, accordingly it makes more difference who he votes for, for county attorney and governor than for president. He needs therefore to know how the commissioners use money to build bridges and highways, how the county poor are provided for, how county criminals are treated. He needs to know what *good* acts are performed by State and County officials, that patriotism of officials may be justly rewarded.

Horace Bushnell's "Barbarism our first Danger" treats of evils we still have to face. Increase of paupers and criminals, corruption in city governments, redress of evils by mobs, are dangers to be remem-

bered in the closet. The influences of the public school and the church, the town meeting and the better class of magazines and papers, as well as of the better class of politicians are occasions for every Christian citizen to give thanks.

"The great main hope is in the power which masters all other modes and means of good, religion. Nothing but religion, a ligature binding society to God can save it. No light save that which is celestial, no virtue but that which is born of God, no power of motivity but that which is drawn from other worlds can suffice to preserve, compact and edify a new state." (Bushnell).

SERVICE AND DISCIPLESHIP

HUMAN endeavor of all kinds lead to many failures. So to imitate Christ leads to failure. The humility, love, Christlikeness, that men gain by effort, fall a little short of what they were meant to be. Nevertheless the faithful efforts to be good and to do good, to fill the world with good, will stand out as good work surely and will last longer than material achievements which may at present look more glorious; and they will be used for worthier purposes. Let all Christians assume full freedom to imitate Christ everywhere, in every way, believing there is one who "worketh in them" to accomplish good even beyond their own designs. Let the believer freely endeavor to be all that he ought to be, to do all that he ought to do, to understand all the truth.

We realize easily the pleasure of mastery over the lower physical world; but we ought also to make progress in understanding the highest spiritual forces. We ought to exercise the power of purity, of Godliness, of Spirituality. It is too frequently felt that one can be a power only in old spheres of exercise. There are new worlds in the soul, which can be explored in later years. There are possibili-

ties that can be discovered after numberless efforts and failures. Let us not be content to be only what people take us to be. Let us not settle down to be only what a small round of duties would make us. We also may so stand before godless men and wicked forces of the world, that they shall fall back and fall to the ground before Him who reigneth in us. Even though they mock at us afterward let us reveal unto them the Power from on High.

What are we going to be found when the Master comes? What were we just now? What were we through the hours of yesterday? We shall be what the days are making us. Every man will reach the place his separate steps take him. If our days are empty, vain, unprayerful, then the result cannot be otherwise.

An artist acquires his taste, skill, power, judgment, by practice. A merchant is made a merchant by what his hands and brain are doing day after day. A farmer becomes a farmer by practice. There is no question but that God is the source of our good, but man enters the inheritance provided him, little by little as he practices,—as he has faith and courage to practice.

"Trading with one's talents," "sowing the seeds" faithfully, we find an increase to which God's hand has assisted us. The fact that God is not a "hard master" can only be found out after faithful obedi-

ence. He allows Himself to seem hard. But faith proving Him finds a marvellous bounty.

"To him that hath shall be given" and "from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath," seems unjust. Carried however into the sphere above justice, into that of *mercy,* these statements are explained. Among God's children, only he has not the best, who will not receive it, to whom therefore it will do no good to give it. In the treatment of man by man, these laws, from the standpoint of pure justice, are "austere." As laws to control merciful conduct they are not austere. The benevolent, obeying these rules, will give where it is of some use to give, will withhold where it is of no use to give. Good squandered is an injury to the recipient. Pity is no safe guide to benevolence.

. . . .

"Preach the word; be instant in season,
out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort,
with all long suffering and teaching."

One should be ever preaching, by shedding light on the way of life ("teaching"), by kindly forbearance and patient waiting ("long-suffering"), by urging others to wise and right conduct ("exhortation"). With regard to the other methods of preaching mentioned in the text, it is to be noticed that he reproves as Christ did, who suffers, himself, in giv-

ing reproof. When our Lord rebuked the scribes and Pharisees saying "woe unto you . . . hypocrites" He placed Himself, a helpless man in their hands, and knew that he had aroused their murderous hatred to his own peril. When he rebuked Judas giving him the sop after saying "he to whom I give a sop shall betray me," He permitted him to leave that he might carry out his plan of betrayal, saying to him "what thou doest do quickly." To rebuke those who are in our power harshly may often have the effect of reproaching them. The words which wrench our hearts, and make us love more those whom we may have wounded, are spoken as Christ spake. Needed reproofs are not given too often, only should they be more often given with prayer and humility.

. . . .

> "Behold the sower went forth to sow: . . . and as he sowed some seed fell on rocky ground, . . . And other fell among the thorns. . . . And others fell into the good ground."

There is a hint in this passage of the patience needed by him who sows the Word. Though it is by the way and not the main thought of the parable, it is still helpful.

There is a savage or nomadic condition of society

when man obtains his food by migrating to some place where nature will provide it for him. He does not presume to control natural forces and make them feed him. He does not regard it his duty to exercise forethought for the year, sowing in the spring what he shall reap in the fall and store for the winter.

In spiritual life and in culture thereof man has not advanced fully to the agricultural stage. The Christian looks for immediate blessings in his heart as a return for his prayers, his worship, and his service; he does not pray today for blessings to be received a year or ten years hence, he does not undertake a system of worship which will accustom his soul to enjoy the society of his Lord, nor engage in plans of work which will bring blessings in the distant future. The church does not lay out in thought a neglected field adjoining for its prayers and labors during a period of years. She often expects immediate "results" from a three weeks series of meetings and accordingly interest becomes aroused. The immediate prospect of building a church or gathering new members arouses the interest of a people; but to labor where fields are forbidding, to sow for a period of years without visible results, to look forward ten years for "fruit," is not yet a part of the policy of the churches. Such a policy would remove the elements of uncertainty from the growth

of churches. Fidelity in prayer and service would more surely be followed by spiritual results than industrious seed sowing is followed by harvest.

In like manner the material income of a church, its ingathering for missions and benevolence should not depend upon appeals alone, but upon years of instruction, of argument, of patient waiting. There must be cultivation of unpromising fields. We are not spiritual *workmen* so long as we make appeals only where we expect immediate returns. We become such only as we work with anticipation of a distant harvest. The uninformed Christian has a right to our mission intelligence. The mission intelligence is the gospel to him, as the story of the incarnation and of the cross is to the pagan. To him it brings larger consecration, larger life, to the pagan it brings the same. We should be as faithful spreading the mission intelligence at home, as the missionary abroad is in preaching. Spiritual results are slower than material. The period between sowing and reaping is many times as long often after giving forth of spiritual truth. The church which marks out its field, and with faith anticipates a harvest and persistently and industriously gives thought to essential details in preparation therefor, shall not be disappointed.

The individual's spiritual growth is not uncertain if, in like manner, he with patience wait for it.

THE RIGHT desire, the right effort can never fail. Christians lack assurance because of the loftiness of their ideals, but God's grace is sufficient to sustain us while we look up and are impressed with our great unworthiness.

The best self-examination, is to find God in one's experience. Now He clothes you in humility, now in reverence, now in patience. Despair, rebuke, want, emptiness, all are the influences of His saving grace.

The degree of confidence we have that what we ask is what God would desire to give, is ground for faith. Because God *desires* to give us His Spirit, to *ask* for the Holy Spirit is to receive. To ask intelligently for salvation is to be saved. That is, to ask to be made to hate sin and love holiness is to be saved. To ask for sanctification is to be sanctified. God, because He is good, will give good things to them that ask Him. To keep asking for what is good is surely to bring us to all those good things which we ask for.

The greatest power possible to mankind is through importunate and persistent prayer. Every Christian has grown to be what he is, lived to serve as he has,

by the power of someone's prayers. This power is none the less because it cannot be measured, and indeed its effects cannot be perceived clearly except by faith. It is not too bold a statement to say that the chief agency in the recovery of the sick, actually operating, is prayer. The chief agency in extricating us from difficulties is prayer. The power opening our minds to truth and strengthening our souls, teaching us how to do what we ought to do, is prayer.

If the church (two or three together) *will,* souls shall be redeemed, the missionary spirit extended among its members, benevolence increased, purity and righteousness made to prevail, wise cooperation secured, public service rendered. All things best, noble, desirable, are for those who agree in persistent, importunate prayer.

A scientific demonstration of the presence of Jehovah would perhaps meet the demands of reason and satisfy this age as a fulfillment of the prophecy in Revelation that "Every eye shall see Him." One such demonstration could be accomplished by the union of a church in prayer for such good things for itself and for the community in which it was planted, as would be clearly according to God's will to grant. Miraculous spiritual results accomplished by sincere, intelligent people, thus avowedly united, would awaken the world to consciousness of God.

This is an experiment awaiting those who would know the Lord more fully.

There is a higher aim for one to have than to be a man of unselfishness, of love, of kindness, of humility, of righteousness, of love of nature, of spontaneity, of culture, of fidelity, of intelligence, of happiness. It is to be a man of God. To be a man of faith is not so good a phrase as, to be a man of God.

Science may save the people. Nature study may. Literature may. Many modern fads may be the ways of Life; but to have the old custom of simply *calling on the name of the Lord* is best of all. It has been practiced in all times and among all peoples, and like other old customs is worthy of being revived as superior to all others.

There is not only no symbol or image, there is *no idea* that fully embodies the Summum Bonum. The ancient prophets inveighed against images which nevertheless conveyed some true idea of God; the later ecclesiastics fought against science, literature, human morality, and "works." Those who would make known God, may need to contend against many good things. We ever need to look beyond all human thought and feeling, all known good, and *simply* call upon God. Science, literature, human morality and works are evils, if they obscure direct vision of God.

These good things may be small and bad compared with the infiniteness of God.

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